

Message Text

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R 290905Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4113

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

CINCPAC

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEH

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 KUALA LUMPUR 4347

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, XC, UR,CH, US

SUBJECT: FOR THE TIME BEING, WE'RE AHEAD IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

REF: A. MOSCOW 7247; B. RANGOON 2391

1. EMBASSY MOSCOW IN REFERENCE (A) DESCRIBES SOVIET OBJECTIVES
AND STRATEGY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA ONE YEAR AFTER THE FALL OF
SAIGON, AND AMBASSADOR OSBORN HAS COMMENTED ON THIS ANALYSIS
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FROM THE RANGOON PERSPECTIVE IN HIS "WHO'S AHEAD IN SOUTH-

EAST ASIA?" (REF B). WE ARE SUBMITTING IN A SEPARATE MESSAGE OUR VIEWS ON HOW HIS QUESTION SHOULD BE ANSWERED, BUT I AM NOT SATISFIED THAT THE QUESTION ITSELF IS CORRECT. BEHIND IT LIES A CONCEPT OF AREA CONDITIONS AND GREAT POWER RELATIONSHIPS WHICH SEEM TO ME INADEQUATE.

2. THIS FRAMEWORK IS USUALLY DESCRIBED IN THE FOLLOWING TERMS:

THE U.S., USSR, AND PRC ARE COMPETING FOR POWER AND INFLUENCE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. EACH IS TRYING TO LIMIT THE PRESENCE AND INFLUENCE OF THE OTHER TWO WHILE SEEKING A SIGNIFICANT, IF NOT DOMINANT ROLE, FOR ITSELF. THIS COMPETITION IS NOW IN A ROUGH EQUILIBRIUM AND THE MAJOR ROLE OF THE UNITED STATES IS TO MAINTAIN THIS BALANCE SINCE WE DO NOT WISH TO DOMINATE, BUT RATHER TO PREVENT ANY OTHER MAJOR POWER FROM DOING SO. AN AMERICAN MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE AREA IS NEEDED TO MAINTAIN THIS EQUILIBRIUM.

3. I BELIEVE THE FRAMEWORK COULD BE MORE ACCURATELY DESCRIBED IN THE FOLLOWING TERMS:

THE NATIONS OF NON-COMMUNIST SOUTHEAST ASIA HAVE REACHED A LEVEL OF POLITICAL ORGANIZATION, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND REGIONAL COHESION THAT MAKES THEM UNSUSCEPTIBLE TO EASY INTERFERENCE OR MANIPULATION BY ANY OUTSIDE POWER. THEY ARE GOVERNED BY AUTHORITARIAN, RELATIVELY SOPHISTICATED, NATIONALISTIC REGIMES, ALERT AND SENSITIVE TO SUCH PRESSURES. WHILE INTRA-REGIONAL DIFFERENCES EXIST, ASEAN PROVIDES A FRAMEWORK FOR CONCILIATION AND COOPERATION, AND NO COUNTRY IS SEEKING GREAT POWER BACKING IN A QUARREL WITH ITS NEIGHBOR. DISSIDENT MOVEMENTS, WHERE THEY DO EXIST, ARE TOO WEAK AND THEIR PROSPECTS FOR POWER TOO SLIM TO JUSTIFY THE RISKS OF DIRECT OUTSIDE SUPPORT FROM THE MAJOR POWERS. WITH THE END OF THE VIETNAM WAR, A DE FACTO ZONE OF PEACE, FREEDOM AND NEUTRALITY IS EVOLVING--A REGIONAL HIGH-PRESSURE AREA WHICH DOES NOT ATTRACT OR ENCOURAGE FOREIGN INTERVENTION. THE GLOBAL RIVALRY OF THE MAJOR POWERS IS MANIFESTED HERE, BUT IS NOT IN DIRECT CONTESTS FOR INFLUENCE. EACH

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WANTS SOMETHING FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA, BUT IS SEEKING IT ON DIFFERENT LEVELS, AND IN RESPONSE TO DIFFERENT PERCEPTIONS OF ROLES AND NEEDS. THE GAINS OF ONE DO NOT IN MOST CASES MEAN A CORRESPONDING LOSS TO THE OTHERS. THERE IS THEREFORE NO SINGLE EQUILIBRIUM, BUT A RELATIVELY STABLE MIXTURE OF DISCRETE DISEQUILIBRIA. EXPRESSED ANOTHER WAY, IT IS LIKE A TRACKMEET IN WHICH THE CONTESTANTS ARE COMPETING IN DIFFERENT EVENTS, AND

SOME RACES ARE ALREADY OVER.

4. CHINA AND THE SOVIET UNION HAVE MADE GAINS IN THE PAST YEAR, BUT THEY HAVE BEEN FROM A NEGATIVE POSITION WORKING BACK TOWARDS ZERO. BOTH ARE REGARDED WITH DEEP SUSPICION. BOTH SUFFER FROM THE IDEOLOGICAL HANDICAP WHICH OBLIGES THEM TO ASSERT A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PARTY TO PARTY AND GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNMENT RELATIONS,-- A DISTINCTION WHICH IS COMPLETELY UNACCEPTABLE TO THE ASEAN COUNTRIES. IN KUALA LUMPUR THE DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS OF THE TWO COUNTRIES ARE ENGAGING IN THE NORMAL ACTIVITIES OF FOREIGN MISSIONS. THEIR INTENSE GLOBAL RIVALRY IS MUTED, AND NEITHER COUNTRY SEEMS TO BE MAKING ANY EXTRAORDINARY EFFORTS TO WIN INFLUENCE. THERE HAVE BEEN NO HIGH LEVEL VISITS OF SENIOR OFFICIALS FROM EITHER COUNTRY IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS, NOR HAS THE PRC OR THE USSR SENT ANY MAJOR CULTURAL OR SPORTS ATTRACTION. THE RUSSIANS HAVE BEEN TRYING UNSUCCESSFULLY TO CORRECT A SUBSTANTIAL TRADE DEFICIT WITH MALAYSIA (US\$175 MILLION IMPORTS AGAINST US\$4 MILLION EXPORTS). CHINA HAS REACTED COLDLY TO MALAYSIAN REQUESTS FOR COOPERATION WITH THE ITA IN REGULATING ITS TIN SALES, AND UNTIL VERY RECENTLY WAS UNRESPONSIVE TO GOM REQUESTS FOR A HIGHER LEVEL OF RUBBER PURCHASES.

5. IN THE AREA OF TRADE, IT MIGHT BE NOTED THAT THE USSR PROVIDES .1PERCENT OF MALAYSIA'S IMPORTS AND TAKES 4.1PERCENT OF ITS EXPORTS. FOR THE PRC IT IS 2PERCENT OF ITS IMPORTS, AND OF ITS EXPORTS .9PERCENT. FOR ASEAN AS A WHOLE: USSR: EXPORTS .2PERCENT; IMPORTS 1.5PERCENT. PRC: EXPORTS 2.2PERCENT; IMPORTS 2.1PERCENT. NEITHER COUNTRY LOOMS ECONOMICALLY. (THE U.S. ACCOUNTS OF 9.5PERCENT OF MALAYSIA'S IMPORTS AND 14PERCENT OF ITS EXPORTS.)

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AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEH

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

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6. THE USSR IS PRESSING THE GOM TO ACCEPT RUSSIAN ASSISTANCE IN BUILDING THE TEMBELING DAM. ITS EAGERNESS TO DO SO RAISES SUSPICIOUS ABOUT SOVIET MOTIVES, AND THE GOM IS MAKING CONDITIONS AS ONEROUS AS POSSIBLE. THE RUSSIANS, WITH STUBBORN PERSISTENCE, APPARENTLY CONTINUE TO EQUATE AN ASSISTANCE RELATIONSHIP AND PRESENCE WITH INFLUENCE. THEY WOULD FIND INSTRUCTIVE THE VOTING PATTERNS OF THE ASEAN NATIONS IN THE UNGA AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL FORA ON MATTERS OF INTEREST TO THE U.S. THERE IS LITTLE IN THIS
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RECORD TO INDICATE WHICH OF THESE FIVE COUNTRIES ARE "ALLIES" OF THE UNITED STATES, WHICH ARE PROTECTED BY U.S. TROOPS AND BASES, WHICH ARE THE RECIPIENTS OF GRANT ECONOMIC AND/OR MILITARY ASSISTANCE, AND WHICH ARE NONE OF THE ABOVE. CONVERSELY, THE RUSSIANS ARE ALSO MISGUIDED IF THEY BELIEVE THE CLOSING OF AMERICAN BASES AND THE REMOVAL OF AMERICAN MILITARY PRESENCE WILL REDUCE AMERICAN INFLUENCE. OUR EXPERIENCE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA CLEARLY SHOWS THAT A MILITARY PRESENCE, WHILE IT MAY BRING OTHER BENEFITS, IS A NET CONSUMER, NOT A PRODUCER OF INFLUENCE.

6. CHINA HAS ALREADY WON ONE ASPECT OF THE CONTEST. SHEER SIZE AND PROXIMITY, THE CENTURIES OF CONTACT WITH THE CULTURAL RICHNESS OF THE MIDDLE KINGDOM, AND THE LINGUISTIC AND ETHNIC TIES WITH THE NANYANG CHINESE ALL HAVE MADE AN IMPRESSION ON SOUTHEAST ASIA WHICH NEITHER WE NOR THE RUSSIANS WILL EVER BE ABLE TO CHANGE. IT IS REFLECTED IN THE BLOOD LINES OF THE

INTELLECTUAL, COMMERCIAL, AND PROFESSIONAL ELITES, IN THE ENTREPRENEURIAL ENERGY AND ATMOSPHERE OF THE CITIES, AND IN THE EVOLVING MULTITHNIC POPULAR CULTURE. (FIRECRACKERS AND CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTS ARE NOW PART OF MOSLEM CELEBRATIONS AT THE END OF RAMADAN IN MALAYSIA.) IT IS AN INFLUENCE WHICH THE PRC CANNOT MANIPULATE, BUT WHICH HAS A PERSISTENT, GRAVITATIONAL ATTRACTION.

7. WHAT ABOUT THE UNITED STATES? IT IS EVIDENT THAT WE ARE NOT NOW MAKING A MAJOR EFFORT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. WE ARE DEVOTING LESS ATTENTION TO THE AREA AND ALLOCATING TO IT FEWER RESOURCES. OUR POLICY STATEMENTS PLACE IT IN A SECONDARY POSITION, IMPORTANT TO US BUT NOT VITAL. WE HAVE DEMONSTRATED THAT WE SEE NO OVERRIDING U.S. INTERESTS AT STAKE IN THE AREA BY OUR ACCEPTANCE OF THAILAND'S DECISION TO END OUR MILITARY PRESENCE. IT WOULD BE WRONG, HOWEVER, TO DESCRIBE THIS SIMPLY AS A WITHDRAWAL OR A RETREAT. IT IS RATHER A CORRECTION OF PAST GROSS IMBALANCES IN THE ALLOCATION OF OUR RESOURCES AND A REESTABLISHMENT OF A PROPER RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INVOLVEMENT AND NATIONAL INTEREST.

8. THE ONE AREA IN WHICH A CLEAR U.S.-USSR RIVALRY IS PERCEIVED IS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN NAVAL RELATIONSHIP. SINGAPORE AND THE INDONESIAN MILITARY (PRIVATELY) FAVOR A CONFIDENTIAL

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BALANCE. MALAYSIA OPPOSES IT, BUT NOT STRIDENTLY. AS I READ THE GOM ATTITUDE, THEY FEEL IT IS A BIG POWER "I AM KING OF THE MOUNTAIN" GAME BASICALLY IRRELEVANT TO THEIR NEEDS, AND marginally DANGEROUS BECAUSE THEY MIGHT GET CAUGHT IN A CROSS FIRE. THEY ARE WORRIED ABOUT JAPANESE TANKERS, NOT SOVIET WARSHIPS. (AND IT MIGHT BE ARGUED THAT INDONESIAN-MALAYSIAN POSITIONS ON LAW OF THE SEA LIE MORE ATHWART THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN SEA LANES THAN THE SOVIET FLEET.) OUR STATEMENTS THAT WE ARE NOT MERELY COMPETING WITH THE RUSSIANS, AND WOULD HAVE A NAVAL PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN IS, IF ANYTHING, DISQUIETING BECAUSE IT RAISES DOUBTS ON HOW WE INTEND TO USE THIS NAVAL STRENGTH. RAJARATNAM'S ARGUMENT THAT WE NEED A MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE AREA AS UNDERPINNING FOR OUR COMMERCIAL PRESENCE, APART FROM ITS OLD FASHIONED IMPERIAL OVERTONES, LEADS ALSO ONTO DANGEROUS GROUND. THE THREAT TO THIS COMMERCIAL PRESENCE COMES MORE FROM INDIGENOUS NATIONALISM THAN FROM RUSSIAN WARSHIPS, AND LOCAL POLITICAL LEADERS COULD HARDLY ACCEPT THIS KIND OF GUARANTOR OF AMERICAN INVESTMENT.

9. THE CURRENTLY POPULAR ASSERTION THAT AMERICAN INFLUENCE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA IS ON THE WANE IS PURE BUNK. OUR INFLUENCE IS SO PERVASIVE AND WIDESPREAD THAT WE DON'T NOTICE IT. THE NON-COMMUNIST COUNTRIES OF SOUTHEAST ASIA HAVE ADOPTED TO A

SUBSTANTIAL DEGREE OUR MIXED PUBLIC-PRIVATE APPROACH TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, OUR SOCIAL VALUES, OUR BUSINESS METHODS AND MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES, OUR DEFINITION OF THE GOOD LIFE. THE UNIVERSAL USE OF ENGLISH AS THE LANGUAGE OF SCIENCE, BUSINESS, AND DIPLOMACY LINKS THEM TO OUR COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM. WHILE THEY DON'T PRACTICE OUR POLITICAL IDEALS, THEY AT LEAST PAY TRIBUTE TO THEM BY HOLDING ELECTIONS AND CALLING THEMSELVES DEMOCRACIES. THEIR ELITES ARE CLOSER TO US THAN THEY ARE TO THEIR OWN MASSES. K.L. TODAY RESEMBLES HONOLULU MORE THAN IT DOES KOTA BAHRU. IT IS IRONIC THAT THE OVERSEAS CHINESE, LONG REGARDED AS A POTENTIAL CHANNEL OF COMMUNIST SUBVERSION, HAVE BEEN THE MOST ENTHUSIASTIC ADOPTERS OF THE AMERICAN WAY, PERHAPS BECAUSE OF ITS COMPATIBILITY WITH THE CHINESE TRADITIONS OF INDUSTRY, THRIFT, AND ACHIEVEMENT. THE PRC, USSR, AND SRV MODELS FOR THE PRESENT, AT LEAST, HAVE NO APPEAL. WHO WOULD BUY A RUSSIAN COMPUTER, CONSULT A PRC ECONOMIST, CONFIDENTIAL

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OR SEND A STUDENT TO THE PATRICE LUMUMBA SCHOOL OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION? ALL COUNTRIES OF SOUTHEAST ASIA, COMMUNIST OR NON-COMMUNIST, MUST HAVE OUR SKILLS, OUR TECHNOLOGY, AND OUR MARKETS. EVEN THE PROUD VIETNAMESE WHO SEE THEMSELVES AS THE AGGRIEVED VICTORS, ARE COURTING US IN THE ONLY WAY THEY KNOW HOW TO DEAL WITH THE UNITED STATES,-- BY MAKING NON-NEGOTIABLE DEMANDS.

10. HOWEVER PERVASIVE OUR INFLUENCE, IT DOES NOT OF COURSE MEAN CONTROL. BECAUSE OUR MODELS ARE ACCEPTED DOES NOT MEAN THAT IN ANY GIVEN INSTANCE THESE NATIONS WILL DO AS WE WISH. THIS FREEDOM OF ACTION IS INHERENT IN THE SYSTEM WE ESPOUSE. ALSO, THERE ARE NO PERMANENT VICTORIES IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS. INFLUENCE IS HIGHLY PERISHABLE AND IF THE NON-COMMUNIST ASIAN ELITES DON'T SUCCEED IN COPING WITH THE PROBLEMS FACING THEIR NATIONS, IF THEY BECOME CORRUPT AND OPPRESSIVE, THEY WILL BE REPLACED, PROBABLY VIOLENTLY, BY SOME OTHER GROUP THAT WILL TRY DIFFERENT METHODS LESS TO OUR LIKING.

11. BEFORE CONSIDERING THE POLICY IMPLICATIONS OF THIS ANALYSIS, SOME DISCUSSION OF THE ROLE OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM IS NECESSARY. EVEN IF THE SRV IS NOT THE PROXY OF THE USSR, HANOI HAS A SIGNIFICANT INDEPENDENT CAPACITY FOR SUBVERSION AND DISRUPTION. IT APPEARS AT PRESENT, HOWEVER, THAT POLITICAL ADVENTURISM IS NOT ITS INTENTION, IT WILL CONCENTRATE ON RECONSTRUCTION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND THAT IT IS LOOKING TO THE ASEAN COUNTRIES FOR ASSISTANCE AND COOPERATION. NONETHELESS, THE RECENT ASIA TOUR OF THE SRV VICE FOREIGN MINISTER PHAN HIEN SHOWED THAT VIETNAM'S NEIGHBORS LOOK ON IT WITH HIGH LEVELS OF MISTRUST. IN SINGAPORE THE VIETNAMESE HAD A

HIGHLY SALUTARY CONFRONTATION WITH A TOUGHNESS AND ARROGANCE
COMPARABLE TO THEIR OWN, BUT ALLOWING FOR THE DIFFERENCES
IN NATIONAL STYLES, THEY FOUND EVERYWHERE SUSPICION AND
UNREADINESS TO ACCEPT THEIR PROTESTATIONS OF FRIENDSHIP AT
FACE VALUE. ALL WERE READY TO DEAL WITH A FRIENDLY VIETNAM,
BUT NONE SHOWED ANY DISPOSITION TO COMPLETELY LOWER ITS
GUARD. IT IS SIGNIFICANT THAT IN RECENT WEEKS BOTH SINGAPORE
AND THAILAND HAVE ANNOUNCED THEIR INTENTION TO BUY F-5E'S
AND MALAYSIA HAS PURCHASED 26 HELICOPTERS AND IS TAKING
DELIVERY ON A SQUADRON OF C-130'S. THE SRV IS GOING TO
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FIND IT NO EASIER THAN THE USSR OR THE PRC TO EXPAND ITS
INFLUENCE, AND IN THE COURSE OF EXTENDED INTERACTION WITH
THE ASEAN COUNTRIES, IT IS BY NO MEANS CERTAIN THAT IT WILL
NOT BE AS MUCH INFLUENCED AS INFLUENCING.

12. TURNING FINALLY TO THE QUESTION OF DEFINING A PROPER
ROLE FOR THE UNITED STATES, WHAT SHOULD BE THE DIRECTION
OF U.S. POLICY?

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- WE SHOULD GIVE UP THE SEARCH FOR A REGIONAL EQUILIBRIUM TO BALANCE. UNDER THE GENERAL GLOBAL STRATEGIC NUCLEAR BALANCE WHICH WE ARE MAINTAINING, SOUTHEAST ASIA IS UNDER NO SIGNIFICANT DANGER FROM EITHER THE PRC OR COMMUNIST CHINA.

-WE SHOULD NOT DEVOTE U.S. RESOURCES TO "RESISTING AGGRESSION" AND "MAINTAINING TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY" IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. THE NATIONS OF THE AREA, INSIDE THE FRAMEWORK OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION, HAVE BEEN, ARE, CONFIDENTIAL

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AND WILL BE ENGAGING IN ACTIVITIES WHICH COULD BE CALLED AGGRESSION OR INTERFERENCE IN EACH OTHER'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS. TO CITE SOME EXAMPLES, INDONESIA BOTH COMMITTED AGGRESSION AND VIOLATED ITS OWN TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY BY ABSORBING TIMOR. MALAYSIA HAS HELPED INSURGENTS IN THE PHILIPPINES, AND THE VIETNAMESE ARE HELPING INSURGENTS IN THAILAND. THAILAND MAY BE HELPING INSURGENTS IN LAOS. MALAYSIA IS GIVING SANCTUARY TO BRUNEI REBELS, AND MAY HELP MOSLEM INSURGENTS IN THAILAND IF THE THAIS DON'T MOVE AGAINST MALAYSIAN TERRORISTS ENJOYING SANCTUARY IN THAILAND. SO IT GOES, AND WE DON'T NEED TO GET INVOLVED. WE CAN LET THESE POLITICAL "ADJUSTMENTS" FIND THEIR OWN LEVEL AND PERMIT ASIAN SOLUTIONS TO EMERGE TO ASIAN PROBLEMS.

-THE ASEAN NATIONS ARE THREATENED MOST FROM WEAKNESSES WITHIN THEIR OWN SOCIETIES, NOT FROM OUTSIDE AGGRESSION OR INTERNAL INSURGENTS. WE CAN HAVE LITTLE DIRECT INFLUENCE ON THESE WEAKNESSES, BUT WE CAN HELP INDIRECTLY BY ASSISTING THE GOVERNING ELITES TO ACQUIRE THE RESOURCES AND THE KNOWLEDGE TO COPE WITH THEIR PROBLEMS. COMMODITY PRICE STABILIZATION AND TRADE CONCESSIONS IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR, AND INVESTMENT IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR HELP TO PROVIDE THE RESOURCES. TRAINING AND EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE PROVIDE THE TECHNOLOGY AND KNOWLEDGE.

-I PROPOSED LAST YEAR A GREATLY EXPANDED PROGRAM OF

GRADUATE LEVEL TRAINING IN THE UNITED STATES (KL 2447)
AND I CONTINUE TO FEEL THAT WE COULD AND SHOULD BE DOING
MUCH MORE IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN INVESTMENT IN SOUTHEAST
ASIA. MALAYSIA IS NOW SPENDING US\$3 MILLION EACH YEAR
TO SEND STUDENTS TO THE UNITED STATES. PROVIDING MATCHING
FUNDS MIGHT BE A WAY OF PUTTING SUCH A PROGRAM ON A TRULY
MUTUAL BASIS.

-A NEW MILITARY RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COUNTRIES OF
SOUTHEAST ASIA IS EMERGING AND WE SHOULD MOVE TO MEET IT,
NOT RESIST IT. THEY NOW BELIEVE THAT NON-ALIGNED CREDENTIALS
PROVIDE GREATER SECURITY THAN A DEFENSE ARRANGEMENT WITH THE
UNITED STATES. YET WHILE THEY SEEK POLITICAL DISENGAGEMENT,
THEY ARE BUYING U.S. MILITARY EQUIPMENT. AS IN ALL OTHER
FIELDS, THEY NEED OUR TECHNOLOGY AND OUR SKILLS. WE
SHOULD ACCOMMODATE TO THIS DESIRE TO MAKE THEIR RELATIONSHIP
WITH THE U.S. AS POLITICALLY STERILE AS POSSIBLE, WHILE
AT THE SAME TIME FORING CLOSER PROFESSIONAL SERVICE-TO-
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SERVICE TIES THAT ARE FREE OF THE OLD MAAG PATRON-CLIENT
DEPENDENCE AND THE PHONY "MUTUALITY" OF THE "ONE HORSE,
ONE RABBIT" DEFENSE ARRANGEMENTS.

-WE SHOULD ENDORSE PUBLICLY THE ZONE OF PEACE,
FREEDOM AND NEUTRALITY. WE HAVE ACCEPTED IT IN THAILAND
AND WE ARE MOVING TOWARDS IT IN THE PHILIPPINES. IT IS
A SYMBOLIC ACT, SUPPORTING A GENERALIZED UPPER CASE GOOD.
NO CONSEQUENCES NECESSARILY FLOW FROM IT, AND WE SHOULD NOT
BE DETERRED BY LEGALISTIC ARGUMENTS ABOUT CONSISTENCY. IT
WILL NOT BE EXPECTED OF US. AT THE SAME TIME IT WILL BE
WELCOMED IN ASEAN, AND IT WILL PUT THE USSR AND PRC ON THE
DEFENSIVE. WE HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE FROM SUPPORTING A
POLICY OF "EQUIDISTANCE." IT PROVIDES THE ASEAN NATIONS
WITH A RATIONALE FOR HOLDING THE PRC AND USSR AT ARMS
LENGTH WHILE THEY ARE DRAWN BY THEIR ECONOMIC NEEDS MORE
SECURELY INTO OUR ORBIT.
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